

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE Montana Partners for Fish & Wildlife 420 Barrett St. Dillon, Montana 59725



May 30, 2014

Jim Darling Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Future Fisheries Improvement Program 1420 East 6th avenue P.O. Box 200701 Helena, MY 59620-0701

Dear Jim,

Please find enclosed the Bean Creek Restoration Project application for Montana Fish, Wildlife & Park's (FWP) Future Fisheries Improvement Program. I have teamed with Matt Jaeger - FWP's Beaverhead/Ruby Fisheries Management Biologist, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Beaverhead County, the private landowner and grazing lessee on this project designed to improve habitat for westslope cutthroat trout (WSCTT). This project is part of a larger conservation effort in the Red Rock Watershed and Bean Creek to enhance and conserve Montana's State fish the WSCTT. Bean Creek is currently one of only three remaining populations in the Red Rock watershed that still has a genetically pure population of WSCTT. With that said, it is a priority for FWP, USFWS, TNC and the BLM to enhance habitat and address the threats to conserve this population. In 2013, the BLM implemented a lager project and management plan that will improve stream habitat less than one mile upstream of this project. Our proposal will help to continue those efforts downstream on private lands.

This project was submitted to FFIP, I believe in 2007, and was approved by the FFIP panel. However, the landowner who is supportive of the project, but is not present most of the year, did not want to commit to maintaining a riparian fence that will be installed as part of this project. Since that time, we have worked with the landowner and grazing lessee to address the maintenance issue. The lessee has generously agreed to maintain the newly installed riparian fence. With that arrangement the landowner fully supports the project and has signed the landowner agreement.

This project will also alleviate a problematic ice jamming issue that has required a great deal of attention from the landowner, FWP and Beaverhead county. Currently the county road culvert for Bean Creek is undersized and in combination with a compromised stream channel has led to frequent ice jams that have caused a great deal of concern and numerous

actions to prevent damage to building structures and property of the downstream landowner. Over the past two years the landowner has had to request an emergency 310 permit to reroute Bean Creek flow into a ditch around their property. This project will help alleviate the ice jam issue by improving the channel and installing a larger culvert which will benefit the stream, the landowner, the county and WSCTT.

I appreciate the Mission of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program, the continued commitment by FWP to Montana Fisheries resources and the opportunity to submit this proposal. Please call me with any questions or thoughts.

Sincerely,

Jim Magee USFWS Montana Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program Fish and Wildlife Biologist